

**Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes
May 13, 2014**

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) was held on Tuesday, May 13, 2014 at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere, Richmond.

Members Present

- Richard Anderson
- L. Max Beyer
- William Haneke
- Johnny Johnson
- Thad Jones
- Donald Kaiserman
- Sandra Love
- J. Patrick Murray
- William Nicholas
- Belinda Pinckney
- Toddy Puller
- Christopher Stolle
- Rich Schollmann, representing the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF)
- Steven Combs, representing the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC)
- Paul Galanti, Commissioner of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- Mamye BaCote
- Kate Kohler
- Don Lecky
- Bryce Reeves

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Cindy Norwood, Office of the Attorney General
- Leslie Frazier, Office of the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
- Charlie Palumbo, Virginia Employment Commission
- Layton Clark, Virginia Employment Commission
- Andrew Schwartz, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Annie Walker, DVS
- Danielle Weaver, DVS
- Cathy Wilson, DVS

Others Present

- Carrie Ann Alford, Legislative Assistant to Senator Puller
- Kasey Nabal, Legislative Assistant to Senator Reeves

Materials Distributed as part of the Agenda Packet

- Agenda
- Presentations (Agenda Item III)
 - Review of BVS and JLC 2014 Initiatives
- Reports (Agenda Item IV)
 - Benefits Committee Report
 - Care Center Committee Report with attachments
 - Cemeteries Committee Report
 - Joint Leadership Council Report
 - Veterans Services Foundation Report
 - Department of Veterans Services Report
- New Business (Agenda Item V)
 - BVS 2014 Action Plan
 - BVS Committee Assignments
 - BVS Membership Roster: April 9, 2014

Call to Order

Chairman Thad Jones welcomed the BVS members and called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

At Chairman Jones' request, Mr. William Haneke led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll was called and with 14 of 19 members present a quorum was determined. Delegate Richard Anderson arrived a few minutes later, bringing the number of members present to 15, including Mr. Steven Combs representing the JLC, Mr. Rich Schollmann of the VSF, and DVS Commissioner Paul Galanti.

Chairman Jones asked the members and guests to briefly introduce themselves. Their names and organizations are recorded above.

Approval of Agenda

Without objection, the agenda was approved as presented. It is included as Attachment 1.

Approval of January 6, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Jones noted that the January 6, 2014 meeting minutes had been distributed electronically and could also be found on the DVS website.

Chairman Jones asked for a motion to approve the January 6, 2014 meeting minutes as drafted. Mr. Haneke made a **motion, seconded** by Delegate Christopher Stolle, to approve the minutes as drafted. The January 6, 2014 minutes were approved as drafted by unanimous consent.

Presentations

Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program

Ms. Annie Walker, Director of the Department of Veterans Services' Veterans Education, Training, and Employment (VETE) section, gave a presentation on the mission and organization of the VETE section, including the GI Bill certification program and the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP). Ms. Walker announced that VETE would host a ceremony honoring the 70th Anniversary of the passage of the GI Bill. The ceremony is Thursday, May 15 at 6 p.m. at the Virginia War Memorial. She invited the Board members to attend.

Ms. Walker introduced Mr. Andy Schwartz, DVS Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program Manager, who covered veteran employment demographics, the success of the V3 Program, information about the participating companies, and the mission and vision of the V3 Program.

Mr. Schwartz introduced Ms. Charlie Palumbo, Veterans Outreach Coordinator for the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), who reviewed the DVS/VEC partnership and explained the VEC's role in the V3 Program.

Ms. Palumbo introduced Mr. Layton Clark, a Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) with the VEC, who covered the role of VEC LVERs and Disabled Veteran Employment Program (DVOP) specialists in assisting veterans to find employment.

Mr. Schwartz concluded the V3 Program presentation by discussing the V3 Strategic Alliance Group, the services and benefits the V3 Program offers to employers, and V3 Curriculum Development, Certification Process, and Focus Areas.

The combined presentation by Ms. Walker, Mr. Schwartz, Ms. Palumbo, and Mr. Clark is not included in these minutes, but was distributed to the members electronically in PDF format following the meeting. The presentation is available upon request.

Mr. William Nicholas asked Ms. Walker if she has the necessary staff for all of the programs in her section. Ms. Walker replied that current staff resources were sufficient to meet current program requirements, but that growth in VMSDEP or V3 may require additional personnel resources and funding in the near future.

2014 General Assembly Session: BVS and JLC initiatives and other veteran/military legislation

Mr. Steven Combs reviewed the BVS and JLC initiatives for the 2014 General Assembly Session. See *Attachment 2*. For each initiative, he reviewed the BVS or JLC recommendation, the actions taken before and during the session, and the current status of each initiative. Mr. Combs answered questions from the Board members about several of the initiatives. Mr. Combs reported that over 30 military and veteran-related bills were passed by the 2014 General Assembly.

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Combs for his report.

Reports

Benefits Committee

Mr. William Nicholas, Benefits Committee Vice Chairman, delivered the committee report. See *Attachment 3*.

Mr. Nicholas also recognized Mr. John Anderson, DVS Benefits Director, on his retirement after 20+ years with DVS. He also mentioned the vacancies and turnover in the Benefits section due to claims agents leaving DVS for higher paying jobs.

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Nicholas for his report.

Care Centers Committee

Mr. J. Patrick Murray, Care Centers Committee member, delivered the committee report. See *Attachment 4*. Note: the two attachments to the Care Centers Committee report are not included in these minutes, but were distributed to the members electronically in PDF format following the meeting. The attachments are available upon request.

Mr. Combs provided an update on the status of the construction projects at the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center and the Virginia Veterans Care Center, and covered the status of the federal funding grant requests for the planned care centers in Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia. The members asked several questions about the planned projects, which Mr. Combs answered.

Mr. Combs noted that Mr. Don Lecky, Care Centers Committee Chairman, requested that the following be included as part of the committee report:

“I spoke at length with Mr. Bill Van Thiel, Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) Administrator and Ms. Sandra Ranicki, Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) Administrator. We discussed patient care, health inspections, staffing, occupancy, and any issues or concerns they had. Only VITA was mentioned as an issue. Mr. Van Thiel and Ms. Ranicki are both seasoned and experienced Administrators. They feel very supported by Commissioner Galanti. They would welcome the opportunity to give a presentation at a future Board of Veterans Services meeting. Thank you. Don Lecky, Committee Chairman.”

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Murray for his report.

Cemeteries Committee

Ms. Sandra Love, Committee Chair, delivered the Cemeteries Committee report. See *Attachment 5*.

Chairman Jones thanked Ms. Love for her report.

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

Mr. Don Kaiserman gave the JLC report. See Attachment 6.

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Kaiserman for his report.

Veteran Services Foundation

Mr. Rich Schollmann, Chairman of the Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees, delivered the VSF. See Attachment 7. He noted that, as of April 30, the Foundation had received over \$320,000 in donations, of which about \$256,000 is for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP).

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Schollmann for his report.

Department of Veterans Services

Commissioner Galanti delivered the DVS report. See Attachment 8.

He stated that he has been out of the office for the last couple of weeks and left DVS in the capable hands of Deputy Commissioner Cathy Wilson. Commissioner Galanti announced that Ms. Brandi Jancaitis is the new Executive Director of the VWWP.

Commissioner Galanti told the Board that Mr. Roger Sullivan, noted veterans advocate, had recently passed away and that he had attended Mr. Sullivan's memorial service.

Chairman Jones thanked Commissioner Galanti for his report.

New Business

Review 2014 meeting schedule and action plan

Chairman Jones briefly reviewed the 2014 meeting schedule and the 2014 Action Plan. See Attachment 9.

Chairman Jones asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Updated BVS committee assignments

Chairman Jones reviewed the BVS committee assignments and explained that the assignments are subject to change as required. He thanked Mr. Haneke, Mr. Nicholas, Mr. Johnny Johnson, and Ms. Belinda Pinckney for serving on the Benefits Committee; Mr. J. Patrick Murray for serving on the Care Centers Committee; and Ms. Sandra Love and Mr. Max Beyer for serving on Cemeteries Committee.

The updated BVS committee assignments are listed in Attachment 10.

Appoint nominating committee

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Johnson and Ms. Pinckney for agreeing to serve on the nominating committee to nominate candidates for position of Chairman and Vice Chairman. He noted that

elections would be held at the July 22 meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Prepare for Next Meeting

Chairman Jones asked that the BVS members prepare for the next Board meeting by reviewing the JLC and BVS initiatives that did not pass during the 2014 General Assembly and to be prepared to put forward recommendations for consideration by Governor McAuliffe and the 2015 General Assembly.

He reminded the members that elections will be held for BVS Chairman and Vice Chairman at the July 22 meeting.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 1
Board of Veterans Services
Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere
Richmond
May 13, 2014
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- I. Opening, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call and Quorum Determination, Approval of Agenda, and introduction of BVS members, DVS Staff, and Guests – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (10:00 – 10:10)
- II. Approval of January 6, 2014 Meeting Minutes – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (10:10 – 10:15)
- III. Presentations (10:15 – 11:05)
 - a. Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program – *Annie Walker, DVS Veteran Education, Training, and Employment Director and Andy Schwartz, DVS V3 Program Manager*
 - b. 2014 General Assembly session: BVS and JLC initiatives and other veteran/military legislation – *BVS legislative members and Steven Combs, DVS Director of Policy & Planning*
- IV. Reports (11:05 – 11:40)
 - a. Benefits Committee – *Kate Kohler, Committee Chair*
 - b. Care Centers Committee – *Don Lecky, Committee Chair*
 - c. Cemeteries Committee – *Sandra Love, Committee Chair*
 - d. Joint Leadership Council – *Chip Moran, JLC Vice Chairman*
 - e. Veterans Services Foundation – *Rich Schollmann, VSF Chairman*
 - f. Department of Veterans Services – *Paul Galanti, Commissioner*
- V. New Business (11:40 – 11:50)
 - a. Review 2014 meeting schedule and action plan
 - b. Updated BVS committee assignments
 - c. Appoint nominating committee
- VI. Public comment (11:50 – 11:55)
- VII. Prepare for Next Meeting – *Thad Jones, Chairman* (11:55 – 12:00)
- VIII. Adjourn (12:00)

ATTACHMENT 2
BVS and JLC 2014 Initiatives: status as of May 13, 2014

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES (BVS)

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>BVS Recommendation</i>	<i>Type (Budget or Legislation)</i>	<i>Governor McDonnell's introduced budget (12/16/13)</i>	<i>House (HB5002) – passed 3/25/14</i>	<i>Senate (SB5003) – passed 4/8/14</i>
BVS 2014-01	Support the hiring and retention of DVS claims agents by approving a budget amendment for an additional \$500,000 (GF) in FY15 and \$500,000 (GF) in FY16 over and above Governor's budget	Budget	\$86,460 (GF) and one FTE for new Benefits Field office in Fredericksburg, but no funding to support hiring/retention of existing positions	Same as introduced budget	Same as introduced budget
BVS 2014-02	Authorize two additional positions for state veterans cemeteries	Budget	Includes two additional positions	Same as introduced budget	Same as introduced budget
BVS 2014-03	Enact legislation effecting a very limited change to the Code of Virginia in regards to the residency requirements of the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program	Legislation	N/A	HB576: passed 99-0 SB481: passed 99-0 Both bills approved by Governor	HB576: passed 40-0 SB481: passed 40-0 Both bills approved by Governor

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (JLC)

Yellow = difference between House budget and Senate budget

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>JLC Recommendation</i>	<i>Type (Budget or Legislation)</i>	<i>Governor McDonnell's introduced budget (12/16/13)</i>	<i>House (HB5002) – passed 3/25/14</i>	<i>Senate (SB5003) – passed 4/8/14</i>
JLC 2014-01	Support the hiring and retention of DVS claims agents by approving a budget amendment for an additional \$500,000 (GF) in FY15 and \$500,000 (GF) in FY16 over and above Governor's budget	Budget	\$86,460 (GF) and one FTE for new Benefits Field office in Fredericksburg, but no funding to support hiring/retention of existing positions	Same as introduced budget	Same as introduced budget
JLC 2014-02	Support the hiring and retention of veterans by Virginia businesses by continuing base funding for the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program at \$450,000 (GF) per fiscal year	Budget	\$450,000 (GF) base funding for V3 Program in FY15 and FY16	Introduced budget + additional \$100,000 (GF) each year	Same as introduced budget
JLC 2014-03	Support the delivery of mental health and rehabilitative services for Virginia veterans, Guardsmen, Reservists, and family members through the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program by approving a budget amendment for an additional \$500,000 (GF) in FY15 and \$500,000 (GF) in FY16 over and above Governor's budget	Budget	\$372,835 (GF) and \$378,300 (NGF) for VWWP in FY15 and similar amounts in FY16, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$264,218 (GF) for VWWP regions \$108,617 (GF) and \$278,300 (NGF) for AmeriCorps grant 	Same as introduced budget	Introduced budget + additional \$350,000 (GF) each year
JLC 2014-04	Increase opportunities for overseas uniformed military voters to participate in elections by enacting legislation to permit the electronic return of absentee ballots	Legislation	N/A	HB759: passed 98-1 SB11: passed 97-1 Both bills approved by Governor	HB759: passed 40-0 SB11: passed 40-0 Both bills approved by Governor

JLC 2014-05	Support DVS services for homeless veterans by approving a budget amendment for \$450,000 (GF) in FY15 and \$970,000 (GF) in FY16	Budget	Not funded	Not funded	Not funded
JLC 2014-06	Ensure the needs of Virginia veterans are being met by approving a budget amendment for an additional \$190,000 (GF) in FY15 to update the 2010 Virginia Tech report “ <i>Assessing the Experiences, Supportive Service Needs and Service Gaps of Veterans in the Commonwealth of Virginia</i> ”	Budget	Not funded	Not funded	Not funded
JLC 2014-07	Provide a real property tax exemption for spouses of military service members killed in action by passing a resolution identical to the resolution (HJ551) passed by the 2013 General Assembly and by enacting legislation to place a referendum on the ballot for the November 4, 2014 general election	Legislation	N/A	HJ8: passed 96-0 HB46: passed 93-0 HB46 approved by Governor (note: HJ8 does not require approval)	HJ8: passed 38-0 HB46: passed 40-0 HB46 approved by Governor (note: HJ8 does not require approval)

ATTACHMENT 3
BENEFITS COMMITTEE REPORT
May 13, 2014

Chairman Jones and members of the Board:

The Benefits Committee has not met since the last Board meeting, but members have closely followed Department of Veterans Services (DVS) operations. A Committee meeting will be held prior to the July 22 Board meeting in order to consider proposals for the 2015 General Assembly.

2014 BVS Initiatives – two initiatives proposed by the Benefits Committee were adopted by the full Board and submitted to the Governor for consideration in the 2014 General Assembly session.

- BVS 2014-01:
 - Recommendation: that the Governor and General Assembly support the recruitment, hiring, training, and retention of Benefits Section staff by increasing the DVS Benefits Services section budget by \$500,000 per fiscal year.
 - Status: not included in budget.
- BVS 2014-03:
 - Recommendation: that the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation effecting a very limited change to the Code of Virginia in regards to the residency requirements of the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).
 - Status: HB576 (Delegate Stolle) and SB481 (Senator Puller) passed the General Assembly unanimously and have been approved by Governor McAuliffe. Effective July 1, 2014.

Benefit Services

- After almost three years in “temporary” office space, the DVS Benefits HQ office in Roanoke moved back into the newly-renovated Poff Federal Building on May 8-9.
- DVS Benefits Director John Anderson will retire at the end of May after 20+ years of state service. Jim Granger will serve as acting director. DVS Benefits Eastern District Manager Jason Williams has left DVS for a position with another service agency.
- Turnover among DVS claims agents continues to be a significant issue, with recent departures in the Charlottesville, Roanoke, and Virginia Beach offices.
- The BeneVets contractor recently released two sets of upgrades that will improve and enhance the system. These upgrades are normally based on recommendations from DVS field offices and the other users. The latest upgrades include 10 recommended by DVS.
- The Washington DC-based Board of Veterans Appeals Travel Board has scheduled appeal hearings in Roanoke from June 23 to 27.
 - Two judges are scheduled to hear 83 cases, of which 38 will be handled by DVS.
 - These hearings are based upon disability claims filed by veterans and/or widows that were denied or not properly rated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).
 - DVS has begun preparations for the hearings to ensure the best presentation possible. Preparations include a thorough review of claims folders maintained by the VA Regional Office in Roanoke. The folders vary in size from one to five large volumes.

- Seven DVS claims agents completed training at the American Legion National Training Conference in Washington, DC on March 21. DVS paid for five claims agents to attend and the American Legion Department of Virginia for two. This training will help DVS staff members to provide claims representation to Virginia veterans.

Veterans Education, Training, and Employment:

- DVS recently realigned several functions under the new Veterans Education, Training, and Employment (VETE) section of DVS. The VETE section is now responsible for:
 - G.I. Bill program certification and audit (the mission of the State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training, or SAA);
 - Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program;
 - Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP);
 - Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).
- VETE Director Annie Walker has been invited to serve as a member of the VA Veterans' Advisory Committee on Education, which reports directly to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and provides advice to the Secretary on the administration of existing education and training programs for veterans and servicepersons, Reservists and Guard personnel, and for dependents of veterans.
- VMSDEP:
 - The online application system was formally launched on April 14; paper applications will no longer be accepted.
 - The beta testing and soft launch was very successful; the simplicity of the application, customer experience and customer satisfaction was rated very high.
 - The previous application process was time consuming and manually intensive. The steady increase in applications increased the workload and processing time.
 - The manual process also generated a significant amount of telephone calls and e-mails from applicants inquiring about the status of their applications.
 - To date, the processing time and backlog has been reduced from approximately 120 or more days to 30-35 days with no backlogs.
 - The online process has also produced other positive results. For example, sending approval letters by secure e-mail saves on paper, ink, postage, and man-hours.
- GI Bill:
 - The number of Virginians using GI Bill benefits increased from 57,264 in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2012 to 63,381 in FFY 2013.
 - Total benefits paid increased from \$571 million in FFY 2012 to \$842 million in FFY 2013.
 - Virginia ranks 4th in the nation in number of GI Bill students.

Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP)

- VWWP and the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) are working on a pilot project proposal to develop inter-disciplinary teams by integrating Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialists (DVOPs) with existing regional VWWP staff specializing in family, housing, and reentry services. The premise is delivery of intensive services that are housing and employment focused for those facing high barriers. If approved, four DVOPs will be integrated into Region IV and V. DVOPs will work 29 hours per week and VEC and VWWP will share supervision of the positions.

- On June 9 our DVS team will co-sponsor a summit with the Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH) and the Virginia Homeless Outcomes Coordinating Council. The goal of the forum is to build a comprehensive action plan to end Virginia Veteran Homelessness.
- VWWP has partnered with the Virginia Public Health Association (VAPHA) to host a conference on June 16 and 17 in Hampton titled [*Health on the Homefront: Addressing the Health Needs of Members of the U.S. Armed Forces, Veterans and Their Families*](#).
- The VWWP 2013 Progress Report is available on the [VWWP website](#). The 2009 – 2012 Progress Reports are also posted.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Kohler
Chair

ATTACHMENT 4

CARE CENTERS COMMITTEE REPORT

May 13, 2014

Chairman Jones and members of the Board:

Three grant-funded construction projects underway at our veterans care centers and two projects are waiting for federal grant funding. This report of the Care Centers Committee provides an overview of construction project funding and the status of the five projects.

Overview – construction project funding

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will fund up to 65% of construction project costs for state homes (veterans care centers). States fund at least 35%.
- VA/state-funded construction projects can include repairs, improvements, renovations, system or bed replacement, and new construction.
- States submit grant applications to VA for federal funds.
- Because the funding levels requested by the states usually exceeds the funding levels available, the VA ranks grant applications according to the eight Priority Groups established in 38 CFR §59.50.
- Only projects ranked in Priority Group 1 are considered for funding in the current FY. For a project to be ranked in Priority Group 1, the state must have committed to funding its 35% share.
- Priority Group 1 is broken down into seven sub-priority groups (see attached *Example – Prioritization for Priority Group 1* from 38 CFR §59.50).
- Top priority is given to projects that address Life/Safety issues. New construction projects are ranked lower.
- Projects in Priority Group 1 are re-ranked each year. Accordingly, new applications for Life/Safety projects will be ranked ahead of older applications for new construction projects (see attached *VA State Home Construction Grants Priority List for FY2014*).
- The VA tracks projects by Federal Application Identifier (FAI) number.

Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) construction project

- 40-bed addition (Project FAI 51-005)
 - VA funding awarded in FY2012: \$6,066,593.
 - Commonwealth of Virginia funding: \$3,300,000 (General Fund appropriation).
 - Construction began September 2013.
 - Projected completion – late 2014.
 - Projected admission of first residents – early 2015.

Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) construction projects

- Generator and wander guard system replacement (Project FAI 51-009)
 - VA grant award (final award 4/24/14): \$974,249.
 - Commonwealth of Virginia funds: \$524,596 (facility-generated).
 - Planning/design underway.

- New Fire Alarm system, Security system, and Communications system (Project FAI 51-010)
 - VA grant request: \$261,300.
 - Commonwealth of Virginia match: \$140,700 (facility-generated).
 - VA funding decision pending. VVCC is re-evaluating scope of project.

Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia care center construction projects

- Construct new care centers – each with up to 240 beds. Projects FAI 51-006 (Hampton Roads) and FAI 51-008 (Northern Virginia).
- DVS submitted grant applications to the VA in 2005 and 2009, respectively, to construct the new care centers.
- Virginia has committed its 35% share to both projects.
- The VA has ranked the Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia projects at #59 and #61 (#4 and #6 among new construction projects).
- The VA has notified states that VA FY2014 funding levels (approximately \$85 million) will fund Projects 1 – 20.
- The two Virginia projects will compete again for funding in FY2015.
- Governor McAuliffe met with members of Virginia’s Congressional Delegation on April 9 and requested that the delegation work to increase the VA funding pool in order for the two Virginia projects to advance.

Summary – bed status

- Existing: 400 (240 + 160)
- Under construction: 40
- Planned: 480 (240 + 240)
- Total: 920

Respectfully submitted,

Don Lecky
Chair

ATTACHMENT 5
CEMETERIES COMMITTEE REPORT
May 13, 2014

Chairman Jones and members of the Board:

The Cemeteries Committee of the Board of Veterans Services has placed special emphasis over the past year on the following areas:

- Current operations (burial operations, grounds and building maintenance);
- Resource levels (personnel, funding, equipment, and materials);
- Maintenance reserve projects and equipment replacement;
- Construction projects (underway and planned – new services and infrastructure improvement);
- Planning (operations at current cemeteries, phase expansion at current cemeteries, new locations).

Current operations

- FY14 burial numbers at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) and Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin) are projected to be close to FY13 burials – approximately 300 and 150 burials respectively;
- In contract, FY14 burial numbers at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk) will likely top 950, almost 100 more than in FY13;
- Each cemetery is divided into two functional teams led by a manager: burial grounds and burial operations. Just a few of the responsibilities of each area include:
 - Burial grounds: open and close grave sites; place headstones and markers; maintain the cemetery grounds (mow, trim and edge the grass, clear weeds, work in mulch beds, trim trees, etc.) and systems (irrigation, mechanical, etc.); and maintain all cemetery grounds equipment (backhoes, trucks, trailers, mowers, etc.) and buildings;
 - Burial operations: conduct funeral services at the chapel or committal shelter, complete burial/pre-application paperwork for scheduled and future burials, complete administrative reports, complete memorial research work and ordering of memorials for the previous week's burials, respond to requests for assistance from veterans, families, and members of the public.

Resource levels

- The FY15-16 budget bill (not yet approved) would authorize two additional Non general Fund (NGF) positions for the cemeteries. Funding for these positions would come from the federal burial reimbursement;
- With these two additional positions, funding and personnel levels appear to be sufficient to meet projected service levels in FY15-16. The committee will continue to monitor this closely to ensure DVS has the resources necessary to meet the memorial needs of Virginia veterans and their eligible dependents;
- Equipment and material levels appear sufficient to meet current service levels and maintain the cemeteries. The Cemeteries Committee will work closely with DVS to monitor resource levels.

Maintenance reserve projects and equipment replacement

- Maintenance reserve project funds are used for major repair, renovation, or replacement projects to existing cemetery facilities. Cemetery maintenance reserve projects are funded through a direct state general fund appropriations and by a portion of the federal burial reimbursement;
 - The phone system at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia), which dates to 1997, was replaced by a new system.
 - In March, work began at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) to replace the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in the chapel, administrative office building, comfort station building, and the grounds maintenance office building. The project is expected to be completed by the end of May;
 - At the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk) work will begin soon to repair cracks in the asphalt roadways and to install a new drain in a low lying area of the roadway. After the repairs are made the roads will be seal coated and line striped;
- Cemetery equipment (mowers, backhoes, trimmers, tools, etc.) is replaced when it reaches the end of its useful operational life. Equipment is also added to the inventory to meet changing operational requirements. Recent equipment orders include:
 - Two replacement pickup trucks for the Suffolk cemetery;
 - A second mid-size backhoe for the Suffolk cemetery;
 - One new dirt hauler vehicle for each cemetery.
- Current and projected funding levels appear sufficient to support identified maintenance reserve and equipment replacement requirements.

Construction projects

- Work has resumed at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk) and the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) on the pre-installed outer burial container projects. Though DVS began using the new garden sections in December, final completion of the projects had to be put on hold due to the winter weather;
- Remaining work is expected to take about two weeks, and includes:
 - Suffolk: replace soil that was washed out by heavy rains and pressure test the irrigation system;
 - Amelia: replace soil that was washed out by heavy rains and replace pine trees planted along the edge of the new gardens.
- Future projects: include new columbariums at the Suffolk cemetery. Construction is 100% federally funded, but state approval and a Treasury loan may be required. DVS will submit an application for federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs State Cemetery Grants Program.

Planning

- Cemetery planning efforts encompass all of the areas reviewed above (current operations, resource levels, maintenance reserve projects and equipment replacement, and construction) but also concentrate on forecasted demand for services and the capacity of the cemeteries to meet those demands;

- Three major studies, one completed and two nearing completion, will serve as excellent tools for DVS, the Board of Veterans Services, the Governor, and the General Assembly in meeting the memorial needs of Virginia veterans and their families;
- Completed: “*Commemorating Military Service and Sacrifice in Virginia: An Analysis of Veteran Memorial Needs*,”
 - Completed in May 2013 by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service of the University of Virginia, this study projects the demands for services at state veterans cemeteries over the next 25 years and recommends new/expanded services to keep pace with demands;
 - The study also projects the eventual closure of Culpeper National Cemetery to new ground interments. It identifies Amherst County as the best location for a fourth state veterans cemetery as a replacement for Culpeper National Cemetery.
- Underway: development of master plans for the Amelia and Suffolk cemeteries. The plans are expected to be complete by the end of FY14. The master plans will guide future phase development at the cemeteries.
- The Cemeteries Committee will continue to be engaged with DVS in all planning efforts and will report to the Board on these at future meetings.

I would like to thank and commend my fellow committee members Max Beyer and Don Kaiserman for their hard work. Thanks also to BVS Chairman Thad Jones and to George Corbett, representing the JLC, for their continued excellent work with the committee. A special thanks to DVS Cemeteries Director Dan Kemano and the cemetery team for working so hard to honor our veterans and their families.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra D. Love
Chair

ATTACHMENT 6

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Report to the Board of Veterans Services May 13, 2014

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) has met twice since the last report to the Board of Veterans Services (BVS):

- January 9, 2014 (annual Conference at the General Assembly);
- March 19, 2014 (regular meeting).

The next JLC meeting is May 21. At the meeting, the JLC will:

- Continue to review actions taken during the 2014 General Assembly on JLC and BVS 2014 Initiatives;
- Review and discuss potential 2015 JLC Initiatives;
- Review prior-year (2004-2014) JLC initiatives;
- Appoint a Nominating Committee for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair (elections will be held at the July 16 meeting).

At the October 16, 2013 JLC meeting, Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) member Al Pianalto and VSF Executive Director Jack Hilgers gave an excellent presentation on researching and evaluating veterans charities to help donors make informed donation decisions. A follow-on presentation on the steps citizens should take if they suspect a charity of fraudulent solicitation is scheduled for the May 21 meeting.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with the BVS in support of Virginia's veterans in 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas "Chip" Moran
Vice Chairman

ATTACHMENT 7

VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION REPORT TO Board of Veterans Services May 13, 2014

The Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees has held two meetings since last BVS meeting. A meeting was held on March 26, 2014 and on May 7, 2014 with a quorum present and the Development and Finance Committees met before each Board meeting. The following events occurred and actions taken at the meetings, in addition to the usual reports and updates on VWWP and V3.

- (1) Reviewed Foundation income, expenses, and fundraising events conducted during FY14 were covered;
- (2) Approved the 2nd and 3rd Quarter FY14 VSF Financial Reports;
- (3) Approved FY14 Budget adjustments for VWWP and the Virginia Veterans Care Center;
- (4) Approved VSF-DVS FY15 Budget;
- (5) Approved appointing new member Pat Webb to the Development Committee;
- (6) Adopted a FY15 VSF Milestone Plan (Attached); and
- (7) Appointed a Nominating Committee and elected officers for FY15.

As of 30 April, the Foundation has received donations during FY13 of about \$320,000, of which over \$256,000 is for VWWP. Additionally, there still are a host of future events scheduled for FY14 and FY15 filling. As always, the Foundation extends its sincere congratulations to the outstanding outreach of all DVS activities to realize this significant fundraising level. It could not have been accomplished without the dedication of all DVS personnel.

The Board of Trustees elected the following officers for FY15:

Chair, Richard Schollmann

1st Vice Chair, Jim Boyd

2nd Vice Chair, Meade Spotts

In keeping with the VSF Board Bylaws, their terms will be effective July 1, 2014.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2014 at the Virginia War Memorial. Items for the next meeting may include: (1) approval of the Final Quarter FY13 Financial Statement; (2) approval of the review and updates of VSF-DVS Joint Policies #1, 2, 3 and 4; (3) refine a new draft policy on charitable bequests/planned giving; (4) review VSF FY14 fundraising program and projections for FY15; (5) appointment of committee chairs for FY15.

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Schollmann
VSF Chairman

Attachments: (1) VSF FY15 Milestone Plan

VSF Milestones FY15*

July 1, 2014

Board Officers assume duties

August 6 meeting**

Review FY14 Goals and Objectives/Matrices

Consider Goals and Objectives for FY15

Approve 4th Quarter FY14 Financial Statement

Approve review of VSF-DVS Policies

Board Chair appoints Committee Chairs/Vice Chairs

Approval of Committee Chair/Vice Chair appointments

Approve tentative dates and locations (if available for FY15)

November 5 meeting**

Approve 1st Quarter FY15 Financial Statement

Approve budget adjustments, if any

Approve review of VSF-DVS Policies

Approve Bylaws and MOU changes, if any

March 11, 2015

Request Budget input for FY16 due April 15

March 25 meeting

Approve 2nd Quarter FY15 Financial Statement

Approve budget adjustments, if any

Approve review of VSF-DVS Policies

Confirm dates and locations of 2015 Board meetings

Elect a nominating committee

April 6

Nominating Committee put out call for candidates for officers' positions

May 6 meeting***

Approve 3rd Quarter FY15 Financial Statement

Approve budget adjustments, if any

Approve FY16 budget

Elect officers for FY16

*At all meetings, as appropriate, receive VWWP, V3, and other DVS activity updates.

**In odd numbered years review all VSF-DVS Policies, Bylaws, and MOU

***In Odd numbered years, receive report on APA audit, if available

Department of Veterans Services

Telephone: (804) 786-0286
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Subject: Department of Veterans Services report

- Audits: the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) audit of the *Veterans Services Foundation and Veterans State Nursing Home Care Grant at Department of Veterans Services – for the year ended June 30, 2013* found:
 - Proper recording and reporting of all transactions, in all material respects, in the Commonwealth Accounting and Reporting System;
 - No matters involving internal control and its operation necessary to bring to management’s attention; and
 - No instances of noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations or other matters that are required to be reported.
- Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program – program statistics as of April 23:

○ New Certified Companies	Jobs Pledged
▪ LMI	30
▪ SAIC	75
▪ R J Enterprises of VA	3
▪ Tri-Dim Filter Corporation	1
▪ Ball Metal Verona	4
▪ Navigon	1
▪ Altria Group	5

- Recertified Companies

	Jobs Pledged
▪ SimVentions	5
▪ MeadWestvaco	2
- Statistics
 - 190 Certified Companies
 - 5,719 Jobs Pledged
 - 3,392 Actual Hires Reported
- Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP):
 - Brandi Jancaitis has been selected as the new Executive Director of the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program. She will assume her new post on May 12. She currently serves as the Director, Housing Development for Veterans, Virginia Wounded Warrior Program and has a wealth of experience in human services and the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program.
 - The VWWP was successful in its grant pursuit to expand the Virginia Veterans Corps (VVC) AmeriCorps program. The VVC has provided robust support for the past three years in the Hampton Roads area and this new grant will extend VVC support to South Boston, Petersburg and the Richmond areas;
 - The resources of the VWWP and DVS will be dedicated to ensuring long term stability of the program and replication in other regions of the Commonwealth;
 - Through this grant the VVC will have 28 half-time AmeriCorps members who will continue to serve military service members, veterans and their families, assisting with access to healthcare, behavioral health care, social services, housing, employment or other individual and family services;
 - The grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is for \$186,200 with a \$72,411 match from VWWP/VSF funds;
 - This initiative was highlighted as a best practice at the last National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) meeting by the CEO of CNCS. Senator Warner was on a congratulatory call to the recipients on May 6.
- Veterans care centers:
 - Construction continues on the 40-bed addition to the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center. Completion is expected in late 2014 with the first new residents expected to be admitted in early 2015;
 - The Virginia Veterans Care Center will receive \$974,249 in federal grant funding to replace the emergency generator and patient security system.
- Veterans cemeteries:
 - A project is underway to replace the heating and cooling systems in the chapel, office building, comfort station, and grounds maintenance building at the Amelia cemetery;
 - The master plans for the Amelia and Suffolk cemeteries are nearing completion.

Thank you for your stellar support of the Department of Veterans Services and our programs and services. We look forward to our continued partnership.

ATTACHMENT 9

Board of Veterans Services 2014 Action Plan – “*Keep Building upon Success*”

January 6: “*Establishing our path for success*” meeting

- Discuss 2014 General Assembly session, including Governor’s introduced budget
- Review BVS and JLC 2014 initiatives and other veterans legislation
- Adopt 2014 Meeting Schedule
- Adopt 2014 Action Plan
- Review Code of Virginia and Executive Order 29 (EO29) and the role of the BVS
- Review and endorse the Compact with Virginia’s Veterans

January – May: “*Begin researching and developing BVS 2015 Initiatives*”

- Board members make site visits to DVS facilities
- Committee chairs hold meetings to review/discuss potential initiatives
- Committees research and prepare point papers for May 13 meeting
- Committees review DVS service area plans with DVS directors
- Orientation for new Board members

May 13 meeting

- Review 2014 General Assembly Session: budget and legislation
- Review and discuss committee-proposed 2015 initiatives
- DVS operations briefings – committee chairs and DVS directors
- Appoint nominating committee

May – July: “*Rolling up our sleeves*”

- Board members visit DVS facilities, meet with DVS directors to connect the dots
- Committee chairs hold meetings to review potential 2015 initiatives
- Committees research and prepare point papers for July 22 meeting

July 22 meeting: “*Bringing it all together*”

- Review, discuss, and approve BVS 2015 initiatives
- Review, discuss, and support JLC 2015 initiatives
- Elect BVS Chair and Vice Chair

August 15 (NLT)

- Submit BVS 2015 initiatives to DVS for transmission to Governor
- (Tentative): BVS-JLC Veterans Roundtable with Governor McAuliffe

October 7 meeting: “*Looking ahead*”

- Adopt 2015 Meeting Schedule
- Adopt 2015 Action Plan
- Review DVS Strategic Plan and Compact with Virginia’s Veterans

ATTACHMENT 10

Keep Building Upon Success Committee Assignments

Benefits Committee

- Kate Kohler, Chairman
- William Nicholas, Vice Chairman
- Bill Haneke
- Johnny Johnson
- Belinda Pinckney

Care Centers Committee

- Don Lecky, Chairman
- Chip Moran, Vice Chairman
- J. Patrick Murray

Cemeteries Committee

- Sandra Love, Chairman
- L. Max Beyer, Vice Chairman
- Don Kaiserman

Board Members at Large

- Thad Jones, BVS Chairman
- Christopher Stolle, House of Delegates, BVS Vice Chairman
- Richard Anderson, House of Delegates
- Mamye BaCote, House of Delegates
- Toddy Puller, Senate of Virginia
- Bryce Reeves, Senate of Virginia
- Rich Schollmann, VSF Chairman
- Paul Galanti, DVS Commissioner

Revised May 13, 2014